

N.º 17 junio 2023

POÉTICAS

Revista de Estudios Literarios



MONOGRÁFICO

OCTAVIO PAZ

ARTÍCULOS

Marco Antonio Campos
POEMAS DE APOLLINAIRE
TRADUCIDOS
POR OCTAVIO PAZ

Richard Berengarten
OCTAVIO PAZ
IN CAMBRIDGE, 1970.
REFLECTIONS
AND ITERATIONS

ESTUDIOS

Xicoténcatl Martínez Ruiz
OCTAVIO PAZ:
LO ÍNDICO
INTRADUCIBLE

POEMAS

Joseph Brodsky
POEMAS DEDICADOS
A OCTAVIO PAZ

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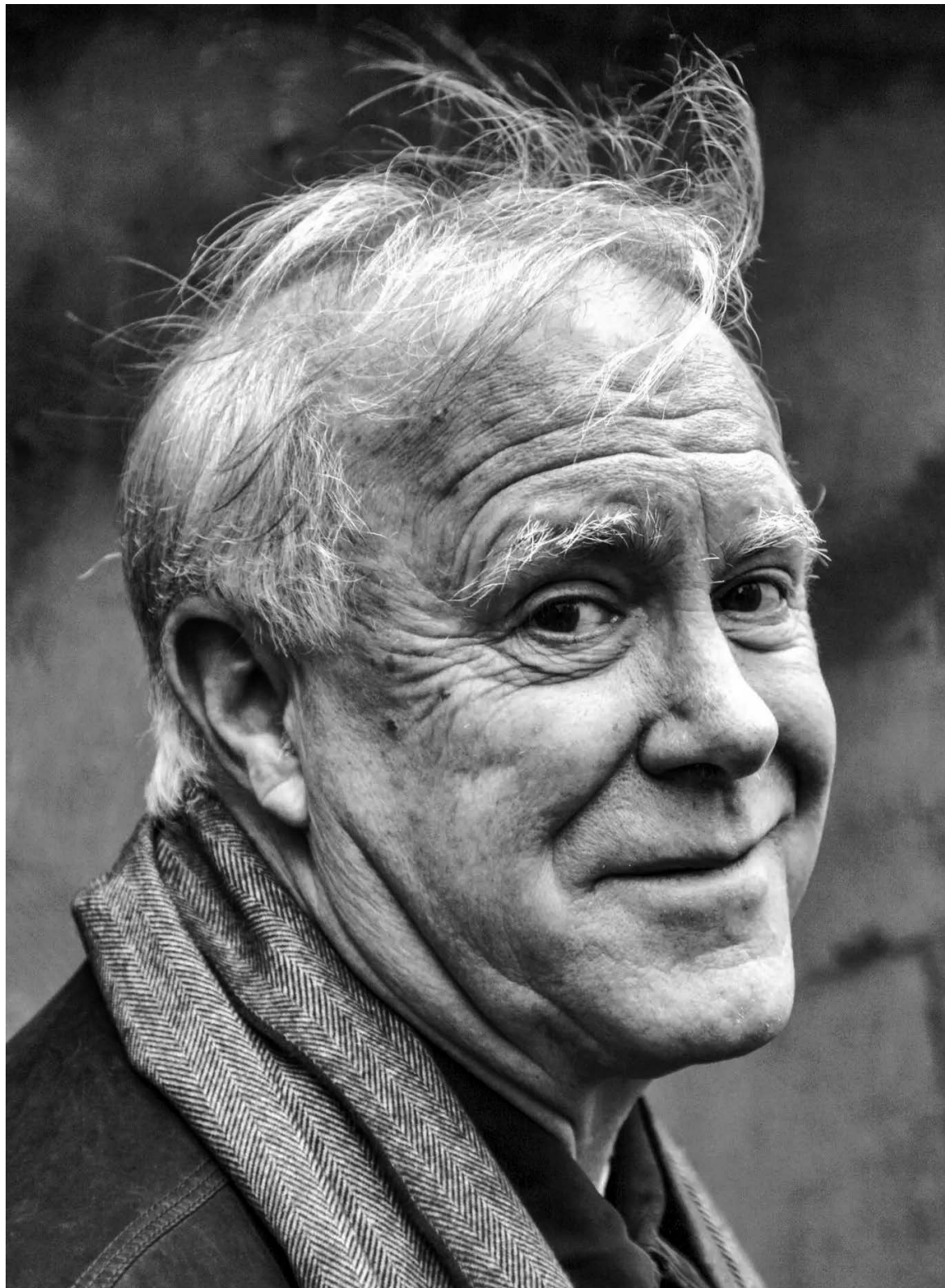


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[RESEÑAS]



Fotografía: Robert Hass.

ROBERT HASS

—
BERKELEY UNIVERSITY
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA, ESTADOS UNIDOS, 1941

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Premio Pulitzer de Estados Unidos
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A POEM BY OCTAVIO PAZ

I was in San Miguel de Allende in January when I heard that Octavio Paz was gravely ill. My hotel room had a rooftop patio. When I walked out onto it at dawn, 6,000 feet up in the Sierra Madre, I looked out at a late Renaissance dome, 18th-century church spires, laundry lines, utility lines, black rooftop cats gazing with what seemed religious reverence at the pigeons they could not quite reach, and in the distance the lines of low bare hills that formed the high

shallow valley of San Miguel. Overhead there was a flock of what must have been two hundred cormorants flying silently and swiftly north. In the dawn light it looked as if the white sky were full of broken black crosses, a kind of aerial, fast-moving cemetery. It could have been an image from one of his poems.

Paz, who died this week, was not only Mexico's greatest poet. He was one of the most remarkable literary figures of this half century. His essays are at least as compelling as his poems and a good way for English readers

Fecha de recepción: 29/05/2023 Fecha de aceptación: 03/06/2023

to get to know him. Paz's great prose book is probably his stunning meditation on the nature of poetry, *The Bow and the Lyre*, and there are others: his book-length essay on Mexico and Mexican culture, *The Labyrinth of Solitude*, his biographical study of Mexico's great poet of the Colonial Period, *Sor Juana de la Cruz*, his essays on history and politics, *One Earth*, *Four or Five Worlds*, and his es-

says on Mexican art. Only Czeslaw Milosz among the poets of his generation has had the same depth and range.

But he was a poet first of all. The best volumes of his work in English are *Selected Poems* and *A Tree Within*, both published by New Directions. Here is one of his poems, gorgeous in Spanish and you can almost hear the original in this English translation by Mark Strand:

WIND AND WATER AND STONE

*The water hollowed the stone, the wind dispersed the water, the stone /
stopped the wind.
Water and wind and stone.*

*The wind sculpted the stone, the stone is a cup of water, The water runs /
off and is wind.
Stone and wind and water.*

*The wind sings in its turnings, the water murmurs as it goes, /
the motionless stone is quiet. Wind and water and stone.*

*One is the other and is neither: among their empty names they pass /
and disappear, water and stone and wind.*